replied by describing the events of the past days and ended by saying, "We won the day without ducking personal danger and we spared the lives of those who were ready to defend us. Is this weakness?"

Then I tried to explain our policy toward the palace of Kshessinskaya, the Communist stronghold. At noon the Soldiers' Section had sent its representatives to the Commander of the Military District, asking him to attack it at once. Since the building was guarded by armed workers' commandos and strong detachments of sailors and machine gunners, it was decided to oppose them with forces that would make any resistance futile. "This is all I can tell you," I said.

That, indeed, was all I knew about the plans of our Soldiers' Section and District Military Command. There was a noise in the street. Officers rushed to the windows. Files of soldiers were advancing along the sidewalks, rifles in hand, followed by a column of armored cars. Next came a cavalry squadron and several Cossack hundreds.[4] A dozen infantry companies brought up the rear. I turned to the officers. "This answers your question about the palace of Kshessinskaya. Its liquidation is a question of hours."

The chairman announced firmly, "There will be no more questions. Our thanks to the Executive Committee. Do you agree, gentlemen?" The answer was a unanimous "Long live the Executive Committee!"

An officer jumped to the dais, shouting, "It will be hell to explain tonight's meeting to the enlisted men. What should we say?" "You came here to discuss the situation with a representative of the Executive Committee," I replied. "If your regimental committee wishes to know more, it may call me at the Tauride Palace." The chairman, shaking my hand, said to the audience, "Gentlemen, I move a resolution of loyalty to the Executive Committee. No objections? Accepted unanimously."

END OF THE COALITION GOVERNMENT

On July 19 the commanding officers and soldiers' representatives of the task force of the Fifth Army came to the Tauride Palace to greet the Executive Committee. The next day the force paraded through the streets of Petrograd. It was not very large compared with the crowds of July 16-18—ten to fifteen thousand in all—but it was perfectly disciplined and well equipped. The troops then drew up before the Tauride Palace.

The Communist assault had been beaten back, but the political situation had become more confused than ever. The Coalition Govern-

[4] "Hundreds" in Cossack regiments were equivalent to squadrons in regular cavalry.